The Evaluation of Ancient Chinese Poems in English
Translation from a Stylistic Perspective

Mao Ye
University of Huddersfield
yemao1103@hotmail.com

Abstract

The focus of the research centers on the issues of foregrounding (Short 1996) as a criterion for evaluation of poem translation from Chinese to English and the translation techniques developed from the evaluation. Using foregrounding as a criterion to evaluate the translation work offers a more objective judgment since it is based on fixed methodology rather than the flexible preference according to different translators. The employment of linguistic methodologies can improve translation techniques in the way that it clearly cites where the stylistic features of the source language poems occur and therefore it is possible to translate these into the target language as accurately as possible in order to make the target language speaker’s experience of the poems more closely resemble that of the source language speaker despite obvious cultural difference. The research uses a case study focusing on a small number of ancient Chinese poems and their various rhymed translations as data for the analysis. The contention is that the more foregrounding features in the translated poems are found siting in similar places to the original poems, the better the
quality of the translations for the target reader/hearer. In analyzing the numbers of these foregrounding features in each translation it is possible to suggest the stylistic impact of the original poem on the target language reader/hearer. This will enable the development of a different critical perspective of the English translation and work towards producing a set of translation techniques.

Key words: Chinese, poem, translation, stylistics, foregrounding

1. Project Introduction

The research generates from my MA assignment *A stylistic Analysis of a Chinese Poem and its Translations into English*. It was found that different versions of English translation from different translators vary and it seems that some translations appear better than the others to a bilingual reader. Nevertheless, the focus of that essay was an attempt to prove how universal methodology is applicable to Chinese practice and I did not go any further. So in the PhD research, I am interested in going into deeper analysis to reveal what the intuition indicated and what else I might develop from that. Stylistics is a rather new field in China, before 1977 there were only 25 papers published in Chinese academic journals, and over 1000 papers between 1977 and 2000. (Reference in Shen 2000). So applying stylistic theory to Chinese poetry translation deserves more exploration. Also, the development of translation techniques based on this stylistic evaluation is the exciting part of the research since it is not included in traditional techniques.

The focus of the research centers on the issues of foregrounding (Short 1996) as a criterion for evaluation of poem translation from Chinese to English and the translation techniques developed from the evaluation. This research is an attempt
to evaluate the different versions of English translation of Chinese poetry based on stylistic analysis using linguistic stylistic methodology as a tool to analyze and interpret original poems in order to find out the features being foregrounded. This explores the issue of how I can apply the theory of foregrounding to a collection of ancient Chinese poems written by Chinese poets and the translations from different translators, demonstrating the linguistic and stylistic features which occur in both the original poem and the translation. This research uses the features of foregrounding occurring in the original poems as a criterion to evaluate the translation. In analyzing the numbers of these foregrounding features in each translation it is possible to suggest the stylistic impact of the original poem on the target language reader/hearer. This will enable the development of a different critical perspective of the English translation and work towards producing a set of translation techniques.

It is important to explore the field of translation evaluation with this specific criterion since traditional evaluation criteria focuses more on conveying the meaning truthfully as the translator sees it, the level of being understandable and being artistic. Ignoring the stylistic features which occur in the source language restrains the translation into the target language so that it cannot be enjoyed as much as for the source language speaker. Using foregrounding as a criterion to evaluate the translation work would be able to offer a more objective judgment since it is based on fixed methodology rather than the flexible preference according to different translators. The employment of linguistic methodologies will improve translation techniques in the way that it clearly cites where the stylistic features of the source language poems occur and therefore it is possible to translate these into the target language as faithfully as possible in order to make the target language speaker’s experience of the poems more closely resemble that of the source language speaker despite obvious cultural difference.

In the following sections, there are several issues which will be discussed. These
include a brief introduction to what has been done for the first stage of the research, the evaluation of the research including the problems which need to be addressed in the coming research years and the methodology followed with a pilot study.

2. Literature Review

Regarding the nature of this research, there are several fundamental aspects which need to be explored before further analysis. They are features of Chinese language and ancient Chinese poetry writing and different schools of translation methods currently in China. For those who are not familiar with Chinese, a brief introduction of official Chinese sound system is introduced.

2.1 Introduction of Pinyin

One of the striking features of Chinese poetry is the variation of tones of characters. To explain how the tones work in the poems, a brief introduction to the Chinese phonetic system is necessary before the analysis. The basic unit in Chinese is a single syllable, which is usually composed of an initial, a final and a tone in Pinyin (literally ‘spelling sound’). Pinyin is the officially recognised system of the phonetic alphabet of Putonghua (Mandarin) in China. The initial is a consonant that begins the syllable and the final covers the rest of the syllable. 21 initials share similar sounds and symbols with some consonants in English but not all of them are the same. 36 finals are similar to the vowels and compound vowels in English. The tone is the variation of pitch, which can rise, fall, remain at the same level or is neutral. In speech, one will move smoothly from one tone to another. The tone of a word is the key role of discriminating its meaning from other characters that have the same pronunciation but a different tone. For example the “ma” sound in Chinese can mean ‘mother’, ‘numbness’, ‘horse’ or ‘swearing’ depending on which of the tones one
uses to enunciate it. There are four (five if the neutral tone is included) distinct tones in standard Chinese pronunciation which can be seen in Figure 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tone</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>High and level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>Start with medium tone, then rises up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Starts low with dip to the bottom then rises toward the top</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th</td>
<td>Starts at the top then falls sharply and strongly to the bottom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Flat, with no emphasis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.2 Chinese poetic features

Following the introduction of Pinyin, this section is a brief demonstration of basic features regarding poetry writing in ancient China, for example, the specific rules of arrangement of tone order for each line and for the whole poem.

Generally speaking, there are two categories of ancient Chinese poem (apart from Ci and Qu, the unique poetry genres in ancient Chinese literature) which are regulated verse and quatrain. Each of them has two common versions of five characters and seven characters each. There are many poetic features in ancient Chinese poetry writing ranging from the layout form to choice of content in poetry. The following instance, obviously different from English, is one of them.

In the genre of poetry, it is characteristic for Chinese poets to employ very strict rules which define the usage of the tones in certain positions in their work (Mao 2007:25-28). Every single character in Chinese has its own tone regarding the
specific meaning it stands for. (A character could have more than one tone or even different pronunciations, which can have different meanings according to the context they are in). In ancient Chinese poetry, one or two characters are separated by a pause; each segment is called a ‘foot’ in linguistic terms. For instance, a line of a seven-character regulated poem contains three double-foot and one single-foot segments. The second character of a double-foot or the character of the single-foot is the beat of the syllable. A line of a seven-character regulated poem contains four beats which can be found on the second, the fourth, the sixth and the last character. It is similar in a line of a five-character regulated poem as one would be able to see three beats on the second, the fourth and the last characters.

As I have mentioned above, the Chinese tone system consists of four tones (the fifth tone is not considered in this case) which, in ancient Chinese poetry, are divided into two groups as 平 (Ping, the first and the second tone) which literally means ‘even’ or ‘smooth’ here and 仄 (Ze, the third and the fourth tone) which literally means being ‘oblique’ or ‘unsmooth’ (Turner 1976:12). For the sake of easy reading, I shall use the Pinyin of these two characters wherever there is a need since no exactly equivalent terms in English of the two can be found. Ping and Ze are an archaic way to divide the four tones into two groups in ancient Chinese language. Roughly matching with the modern Chinese tone system, the Ping is covered by the first and the second tones and the Ze by the third and fourth tones. This would make it easy to explain the alternation of the tones in a poem by setting the first two tones in a group and the last two in the other. There follows a more detailed explanation of the arrangement of tones in the sense of the usages of the Ping and Ze in Chinese poems. Chinese poets write poems in an attempt to create certain tunes by enforcing the special arrangement of the beats in each line of a poem according to the poetic massages they want to convey. For these arrangements, there are some general rules applying even though some exceptions exist. It is essential to note that the tone of the
last character at the end of each line does not count as a part of the tone order since only the even numbered characters of each line work in this way. First of all, for the sake of the features of this literature genre, poets would alternate the order of the Ping and the Ze on the beat characters of each line. The last character does not count. For instance the order should be in a way of Ping, Ze (and Ping) in a line either in five-character-verse poem or seven-character-verse poem. Secondly, the order of the Ping and the Ze of tones of the second, the fourth (and the sixth) characters in the first/third line has to be reversed in the same places in the second/fourth line. For example, if the order of the tone in the first line of a seven-character-verse poem is Ping, Ze and Ping, the second line needs to be written as Ze, Ping and Ze to meet the requirement which could ensure the tune which the poem creates contains alternately high and low pitches. The other rule of tone arrangement is that the Ping and Ze order of tones of the second, the fourth (and the sixth) characters in the second line have to be identical with the same places in the third line. A simple instance would be that the Ping and Ze order of tones in the second line is Ping, Ze and Pin then it has to be copied to the next line. According to the previous two common methods the poets would employ in versification, it is sensible to deduce the last one that the Ping and Ze order of tones of the first line should be identical with the last line. The rules demonstrated above are all applicable to poem writing in ancient Chinese but that does not mean a poem should contain all of the four. Poets can use one or more rules in a poem according to various circumstances.

In order to clarify what I have discussed above, I would like to take the poem ‘Night Mooring at Fengqiao Village’ from Zhang Ji, a poet in the Tang Dynasty, as an instance to make further illustration. The underlined two characters can be seen as a double-foot and the one character as a single-foot. The bold Pinyin on top of characters is the beat of the poem. The alternation of Ping and Ze is marked with the initials P and Z.
枫桥夜泊

张继

yuè luò wū tí shuāng mǎn tiān

月 落 乌 啼 霜 满 天，

Z P Z

jiāng fēng yú huǒ duì chóu mián

江 枫 渔 火 对 愁 眠。

P Z P

gū sū chéng wài hán shān sì

姑 苏 城 外 寒 山 寺，

P Z P

yè bàn zhōng shēn dào kè chuán

夜 半 钟 声 到 客 船。

Z P Z
Night Mooring at Fengqiao Village

By Zhang Ji

The moon is sinking; a crow croaks a dreaming;
‘Neath the night sky the frost casts a haze;
Few fishing-boast lights of th’ river side village
Are dozing off in their mutual sad gaze.
From the Cold Hill Bonzary outside
The city wall of Gusu town,
The resounding bell is tolling its clangour
At midnight to the passenger ship down.

(Sun 2007:269)

Because of its own linguistic features, Chinese poetry is different from English poetry in many ways, but poetry as a literary genre is equally appreciated by reader/hearer in both languages. Therefore, quality translation could ensure the speaker in the target languages to experience the original poem as faithfully as possible. However, due to the absences of linguistic distinctions between two language, some loss over translation might be inevitable.

2.2 Translation propositions

One of the common ideas of poem translation is that there is more than one way
to interpret a poem; therefore, the versions of translation vary according to different interpretations. It is true to some extent, however, stylistics would claim that there are a finite set of reasonable interpretations and this is what would be expected to be analyzed in this research. But first of all, it is necessary to understand the variation of English translation of ancient Chinese poems in general before further research.

As translation work is subjective in the way that the choice of words and the order of the sentences are basically determined by a translator with one’s translation proposition, it is impossible and pointless to narrow translation theories down to a universal standard as far as it truly conveys the meaning of the original. In terms of Chinese ancient poetry translation, one of the most influential translators, Xu Yuanzhong, concludes there are three main streams of poetry translation in the specific case of ancient Chinese to English (Reference in Ma 2006:123 ). They are shown as below.

1. The school of rhymed and metrical translation
2. The school of free style translation
3. The school of paraphrasing translation

Each proposition benefits from the nature of its own translation method. For instance, the first proposition focuses on the level of the duplication of the phonetic and metrical poetic features from the source language, here Chinese, to the target language, here English. The free style translation proposition agrees that the poetry translation should fulfil the purpose of conveying the meaning that the original poem tries to suggest without limiting the choices of words in the target language in order to meet the requirements of copying the source language with its own linguistic poetic features. Thirdly, the translators who prefer paraphrasing translation hold the view that the most important nature of poem translation is the content of the original poem. So, differently from either rhymed translation or free style translation, Pound,
a representative of the paraphrasing translation proposition, proposes that what should be translated in a poem is what ‘could not be lost by translation’ rather than copying its form or tiny details, for instance, the order of words in the original poem, etc (Ma 2006:131). This suggests that the authentic poetic patterns in a language can be abandoned when translating into another language as long as the content of the poem is expressed in translation.

2.2.1 The first proposition

For translators of the first proposition, it is believed that if the rhythm of a poem which contributes to the phonetic features such as alliteration or end-rhyme is lost in translation, the translation can hardly fully express the enjoyment of the original. In the history of this specific translation field, there are both Chinese and foreign supporters. In China, Xu Yuanzhong is the one who advocates this translation method. Xu is the noted translator in modern China as well as the most influential translator strongly holding proposition of the rhymed poetry translation (Li 2009:49) (Huang 2009:78). Amazingly, during sixty years of translating, from 1940, Xu has translated around 3000 Chinese poems so far covering from the ancient The Book of Songs to the modern Chairman Mao’s poems to English and French. Thus, he is seen as the most fruitful translator (Reference in Ma 2006:3). Apart from him, Xu Zhongjie, Wang Rongpei, Wan Changshen are influential translators who have worked on the proposition of rhymed and metrical translation (Mao 2007:8). Of non-Chinese translators, Herbert Allen Giles (1845 –1935) was a British diplomat and sinologist. He was the author of the first widely published Chinese-English dictionary A Chinese-English Dictionary (1892, Shanghai; 1912, London). In this he published many rhymed and metrical translation works about Confucius and ancient Chinese poems such as Confucianism and Its Rivals (1915), Chinese Poetry in English Verse (1898) and Gems of Chinese Literature (1923) (Mao 2007:2). These can be seen as representative of this translation proposition.
2.2.2 The second proposition

As the representative of the free style translation, Chinese translator Sun Dayu, published many anthologies on free style poetry translation from ancient Chinese poems to English. Example of these are *An Anthology of the Tang Dynasty Poetry* (2007) and *An Anthology of Ancient Chinese Poetry and Prose* (1997). There are other translators agree with him in China, for instance Yang Xianyi, Wen Shu, Zhang Bingxing and Qiu Xiao Long (Mao 2007:8) (Ma 2006:128). It is worth mentioning that Yang Xianyi who studied in classics in Merton College, Oxford in 1936, worked with his wife Gladys Taylor as a team, also support free style translation proposition and introduced one of the Four Ancient Chinese Literature Classics *A Dream of Red Mansions* to English speakers.

In the western world, the British orientalist Arthur David Waley (1889-1996), the author of *A Hundred and Seventy Chinese Poems* (1918) and *Chinese Poems* (1946) is a representative of translators who are on the side of free style translation proposition. In the first book just mentioned above, Waley illustrates several key points of his translation methods. These are summed up in the list below.

1. Translating poems from source language to poems in the target language so that they ‘still retain the essential characteristics’

2. ‘I have aimed at literal translation, not paraphrase’

3. ‘Considering imagery to be the soul of poetry, I have avoided either adding images of my own or suppressing those of the original’

4. ‘Each character in the Chinese is represented by a stress in the English; but between the stresses unstressed syllables are of course interposed’
5. He does not use rhyme since it is impossible to produce poetic metric impact in English ‘at all similar to those of original, where the same rhyme sometimes runs through a whole poem.’ and ‘restrictions of rhyme necessarily injure either the vigour of one’s language or the literalness of one’s version’

(Waley 1918:19-20)

It clearly states that Waley presumes the impossibility of duplicating Chinese phonetic features into English thus it is meaningless to try to do so. But he also believes that translation should retain the original as faithful as possible which differs from the paraphrasing translation proposition.

Later on, the American translator Kenneth Rexroth was at the front of this school of translation (Ma 2006:128). Apparently, the biggest distinction between the first two translation propositions is the way of dealing with rhyme. Both translators believe that the poetry translation work needs to be translated in poetry form rather than other literature genres. Without the restriction of rhyme, the translation work with the second proposition is free to choose words from the whole range of vocabulary with no limit on its wording. Besides this, it sticks to the verse form in the target language which enables the reader in English to fully enjoy the translated poem in the same way they would expect from a poem in a native language without distance. As a tendency of poetry translation, ‘free verse’ has a good number of advocates as translation theorist, Joseph L. Malone, commented ‘such a reaction tends to be reinforced by the twentieth-century penchant for translating poetry into free verse, whatever the structure of the original – a procedure that moreover often produces undeniably excellent results’ (Malone 1988:189).

2.2.3 The third proposition

The third proposition of ancient poetry translation from Chinese to English is called ‘Imitation Translation’ By Hongjun Ma (Ma 2006:131) which means paraphrasing
translation. The poet translator Ezra Pound is seen as a representative of this proposition and his first translation anthology of ancient Chinese poems *Cathy* was published in London in 1915. Different from either rhymed translation or free style translation, Pound proposes that what should be translated in a poem is what ‘could not be lost by translation’ rather than copying its form or tiny details, for instance, the order of words in the original (Ma 2006:131). This means that he believes that the most important part of poetry translation should be the content of a poem.

Translators holding this proposition are against the method of translating ancient Chinese poems to English with duplicating rhymes and the original poem layout. In Pound’s translations, the priority is given to creating imagery from Chinese poems to English. This is echoed in another translator Burton Watson who said ‘It is this imagery therefore that it is most important to bring across effectively in translation’ (Reference in Ma 2006:131). With the characteristics of being a poet, Pound’s Chinese poetry translation work, more or less, contains the inspiration of his own poetic mind which results in criticism of the weakness as being not an exactly correct translation according to some critics who hold the fundamental translation principle of being strongly honest to the original poem.

Pound’s poetry translation theory is concluded as following three points. Firstly, he abandons the ‘pseudo-archaic translation diction’ which was popular during Victorian times. Secondly, he treats every single translated poem as ‘necessarily limited criticism’ to the original. At last, an excellent translated poem should be a new poem (Reference in Ma 2006:133). These three principals were against the popular translation proposition in the Western translation world at that time. For instance, Nida commented on the nature of translation saying ‘translating consists in reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source-language message, first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style’ (Nida 1969:12). This is to prioritize the importance of being honest to the original and
transferring the original messages into target language without unnecessary and extra modifying.

Pound’s translation principle might not be acceptable universally, but it is hard to deny that his translation practice is appreciated among English readers. Mexican poet, Octavio Paz, comments on his translation work saying ‘I never found Pound’s theory of translating Chinese persuasive, and in other writings I have tried to explain my reasons. It doesn’t matter: though his theories seemed unreliable, his practice not only convinced me but, literally, enchanted me’ (Weinberger 1987:46).

For translators in China, there are advocates who follow Pound’s translation proposition. Weng Xianliang is one of them. Weng believes that translation should keep the spirit of the original. The spirit is not the written form or rhetorical features but the imagery. A piece of good poetry translation work can be enjoyed only if the spirit of a poem has been transferred but not if layout has been copied with incorrect translation of imagery.

3. Methodology

3.1 Case design

The research will use case study to carry on the poetry translation evaluation. In each case, there are two main parts. The first is data collection. For this part, a collection of poems written by ancient Chinese poets will be collected followed by the translations with different versions for each original. The second part is
evaluation. As mentioned above, the linguistic stylistic analyses will be run on both the original poetry and translation work. Then, comparing the number of occurrences of stylistic foregrounding features in translated poetry with those in original poetry, it will explore the quality of each translation. In order to evaluate the various translations on the objective basis, the case design is presented as below.

The translations of ancient Chinese poems will be limited to only one school of ancient Chinese poetry translation to English. Rhythm and meter play a very important role in ancient Chinese poetry writing. Being rhymed is the most distinctive feature of ancient Chinese poetic which has remained necessary in poetry writing over centuries in China. The school of rhymed and metrical translation is also very influential in this specific translation field. Thus, the choices of the data of translations for each original will be narrowed down to those which are translated with the rhymed and metrical translation proposition. By so doing, all the translations will be classified as being one type and the comparisons among them will avoid involving arguments that different types of translation have their own strengths and weakness, which might not be comparable. In the design, the focus will be on the rhymed translations only. The criterion is based on faithfulness. Comparing with the foregrounding features found in the original poems, the more same or similar foregrounding features in the translated poems are found citing the same or similar places in the original poems, the more faithful the translations are for the target reader/hearer. The undeniable weakness of this design could be that it might exclude some faithful translations that are translated not by the rhymed and metrical translation proposition. The following is a modeling example for this design.

A- A Chinese ancient poem
In Figure 2, assuming there are 10 foregrounding features found in A, B3 has the best quality among the three different versions of translations because it covers most foregrounding features in original poem.

### 3.2 Pilot study

In order to conduct the design for the full-length case study in further research, a pilot study is presented to test the feasibility of the case design. An extract from a Chinese poem ‘Slow Slow Tune’ by Li Qingzhao is chosen and three different versions of English translations are followed for evaluation.

### Data

Chinese poem:
《声声慢》(李清照)
寻寻觅觅，冷冷清清，凄凄惨惨戚戚。
(This line means someone is seeking for something in a cold and quiet place miserably and sadly)

English translations:

1. I look for what I miss,
   I know not what it is,
   I feel so sad, so drear,
   So lonely, without cheer.

2. I've a sense of something missing I must seek.
   Everything about me looks dismal and bleak.
   Nothing that gives me pleasure I can find.

3. So dim, so dark,
   So dense, so dull,
   So damp, so dank,
   So dead!

Stylistic Analyses:

Chinese poem:

1. Syntactic parallelism: 寻觅/冷清/凄惨
   Among the first twelve characters, the three phrases (寻觅,冷清,凄惨) which are seen as six characters (寻觅,冷清,凄惨) each repeat twice in order to emphasize the meaning of those three phrase for the sake of prosody.

2. Internal semantic deviation: 戚戚
   The last two characters as the repetition of a single character not a phrase fail to fit in the pattern set up by the first twelve characters. But it works to draw the first sentence to the end with a fourth falling tone which could be more
powerful than the third tone on the twelfth character.

3. Phonetic parallelism: repetition of 7 characters
   By doubling each character twice, the phonetic and semantic forces of these fourteen characters are enhanced.

English translations:

Translation 1:

1. Syntactic deviation: ‘know not’ is archaic
   The use of ‘know not’ is archaic to present the ancient flavour of the original.

2. Syntactic deviation: ‘drear’ is rare outside poetry
   The appearance of ‘drear’ is rare apart from in poetry, which helps to enhance the poetic style of the original in the translation.

3. Syntactic parallelism: so+,so+,so+
   The three phrases led by ‘so’ enhance the effect of the sad atmosphere by repetition.

Translation 2:

1. Syntactic deviation: Nothing that gives me pleasure I can find (OSP)
   The standard order of this sentence is ‘I can find nothing that gives me pleasure’ (SPO). The inversion helps to create the poetic sense in translation.

Translation 3:

1. Lexical deviation: dead – non-gradable
   The first six adjectives are all gradable apart from the last one. This enhances the powerful conclusion with the negative indication.

2. Syntactic parallelism: so+
   The repetition of seven phrases enhances the semantic forces of these seven adjectives.

3. Phonetic parallelism: monosyllabic /d/ x7
   The rhythm from the repetitions of the 7 monosyllabic word sharing the same consonant /d/ works as duplicating similar phonetic features to the original.
Evaluation Result

Figure 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Stylistic Analysis</th>
<th>Literary Effect</th>
<th>Translation Quality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chinese poem</td>
<td>Semantic D</td>
<td>Enhance sadness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Syntactic P</td>
<td>Emphasise meaning to add sadness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Phonetic P</td>
<td>Tune/rhythm creating</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translation 1</td>
<td>Grammatical D</td>
<td>Emphasise ‘not’</td>
<td>Average faithful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Syntactic D</td>
<td>List sounds endless</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Syntactic P</td>
<td>Emphasise meaning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Phonetic P</td>
<td>Tune/rhythm creating</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translation 2</td>
<td>Grammatical D</td>
<td>Emphasise the ‘object’</td>
<td>Least faithful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translation 3</td>
<td>Lexical D</td>
<td>Enhance sadness</td>
<td>Most faithful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Syntactic P</td>
<td>Emphasise meaning to add sadness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Phonetic P</td>
<td>Tune/rhythm creating</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In figure 3, different colour are used to highlight the similarities of foregrounding instances found in the original poem and the translations. Based on the stylistic analyses of the original text and the three translation versions, translation two is the least faithful because it shares no similarity at all with the original. On the contrast, the third translation is the most faithful as it covers the most foregrounding features found in the ancient Chinese poem.

4. Conclusion
This research aims to evaluate the translation quality of ancient Chinese poems to English from the perspective of foregrounding on the basis of faithfulness. The data will be collected and analysed in several cases for evaluation on the next stage. The evaluation result will be contributing to the current translation criticism in China’s translation study from a more objective point. It can be taken to a further step to develop a new set of translation techniques from the evaluation result.

References


York: Longman.


Turner, J., 1976. *A Golden treasury of Chinese poetry : 121 classical poems*, Hong Kong ; Seattle: Chinese University of Hong Kong ; ; Distributed by University of Washington Press.


